

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF
UNITED STATES-POLISH DIPLO-
MATIC RELATIONS

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, for introducing this legislation commemorating the 90th anniversary of the establishment of U.S.-Polish Diplomatic Relations.

The Polish people and the people of the United States have a long history of friendship that dates back to the American war of independence when Polish patriot Casimir Pulaski volunteered to serve in the Continental Army and led his own cavalry regiment in fighting the British.

We have stood shoulder to shoulder during dark times in both our histories, and in more recent times, we rejoiced together as the iron curtain that had enshrouded Poland and Eastern Europe was cast aside.

And, in 1999, the United States and NATO welcomed Poland into our security partnership.

In 2008, America signed a cooperative security agreement with Poland to further our mutual security interests. This included the establishment of a missile defense system to protect both Europe and the United States from ballistic missile attacks from rogue states such as Iran.

This agreement was signed as a result of the strong courage of Poland's leaders who believed the United States government when it promised to help protect their homeland.

Ironically, on September 17, 2009—the 70th anniversary of the 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland—the Administration withdrew U.S. support for this mutual missile defense system in Europe. The Administration must now respond to find other ways that our cooperative partnership may be advanced.

As a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the author of the NATO First Act, I believe the United States must remain committed to working with the Polish people to sustain our mutual partnership.

I urge support of H. Res. 266.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF “MEETING
OF THE PRESIDENTS”

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark a unique date in our history, the 100th Anniversary of the “Meeting of the Presidents”. On October 16, 1909, U.S. President William Howard Taft and Mexican President Porfirio Diaz met in both El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico in an historic meeting that established the personal relationship between our two countries. The event marked the first in-person meeting between the Presidents of the United States and Mexico. In fact, prior to 1909, no sitting U.S. President had left our country to visit a foreign nation.

The sister cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez went to great lengths to ensure that

this meeting was unlike any other, by adorning memorial columns and welcome arches with the colors of the two nations—red, white, and blue, and red, white, and green. Principal thoroughfares were decorated, thousands of incandescent and arc lamps were lit, and it is said that the cities competed with each other to demonstrate their best hospitality to the visiting Presidents.

The Stone and Webster Public Service Journal of 1909 has a great account of the day's historic events. President Taft arrived in El Paso, on the morning of October 16, 1909 and was met by El Paso Mayor Joseph U. Sweeney. After breakfast, President Taft was taken to the Chamber of Commerce through streets lined with thousands of school children who proudly waved colorful flags and sang patriotic songs. Mexican President Porfirio Diaz traveled across the International Bridge and was met by Secretary of War J.M. Dickinson, Texas Governor Thomas Mitchell Campbell, and Mayor Sweeney who escorted President Diaz to his meeting with President Taft at the Chamber of Commerce.

After the meeting, President Taft journeyed across the border to visit Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Arriving at the border of the Chamizal zone, which was then disputed territory between the U.S. and Mexico, President Taft drove through the International Bridge and was saluted by the Mexican artillery with twenty-one guns. Upon arriving in Mexico, he entered the state carriage of President Diaz and was driven to the Custom House, which served as the temporary capital of the Mexican Republic. After a brief meeting, President Taft returned to El Paso, where he participated in a parade and addressed the cheering crowds. He ended the day by attending a reception in Ciudad Juarez where the two Presidents toasted each other and their respective countries.

This marked the first international trip of any sitting U.S. President and remains a rich part of the storied history of the great city of El Paso, which I represent. To this day, El Paso and Ciudad Juarez have maintained close ties. Culturally, socially, and economically intertwined, these sister cities are home to the largest international border community with a population of over 2 million people. Since that time, El Paso and Ciudad Juarez have hosted four joint meetings between the presidents of Mexico and the United States, more than any other border city.

On January 12, 2009, President-elect Obama continued this spirit of cooperation by meeting with President Felipe Calderon in his first face-to-face talks with a foreign head of state. This meeting fulfilled a tradition in effect since 1980 of U.S. Presidents talking with their Mexican counterparts before being sworn in, to underscore the special relationship between the two nations.

My good friend, Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. Arturo Sarukhan, reflecting on this special occasion said, “there is no more important bilateral relationship in the world today than the one between Mexico and the United States. . . . October 16th marks a date that should inspire us all to continue working to ensure that both Mexicans and Americans continue strengthening a partnership that must lead both countries toward greater development, security, prosperity and well-being for our two peoples.”

Let us mark this occasion by committing ourselves to push forward to strengthen the

relationship between Mexico and the United States. I applaud the work of President Obama and President Calderon to foster a closer relationship with our southern neighbor. There is no better way to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the “Meeting of the Presidents” than by continuing the legacy of strong diplomatic ties with our friends from Mexico.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION CON-
DEMNING THE ILLEGAL EXTRAC-
TION OF MADAGASCAR'S NAT-
URAL RESOURCES

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution to condemn the illegal extraction of Madagascar's unique and invaluable natural resources. I am joined in this effort by DONALD PAYNE, Chair of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, and ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, Chair of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment.

Madagascar hosts some of this planet's greatest diversity. Larger than California, this island nation hosts over 150,000 species found nowhere else. The people of Madagascar depend on these incredible and unique resources for survival. Yet, political turmoil is putting the honest livelihoods of many, as well as one of our planet's greatest treasures, in extreme peril.

Reports from Madagascar are dire and detail rampant illegal logging, mining, and resource degradation. This resolution condemns this ongoing tragedy and calls for the restoration of rule of law. It is my hope that calling attention to this issue will spur change.

REVEREND DR. FRANK JACKSON

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the wonderful life of Reverend Dr. Frank Jackson. His vibrant spirit, limitless compassion and selfless commitment to service will be missed by all who knew him. Through his ministry at Faith Presbyterian Church of Oakland, Reverend Jackson brought our community to a greater understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the life of the Church. He was an exemplary husband, father, pastor, community leader, teacher and friend. With his passing on September 11, 2009, we look to Reverend Jackson's legacy and the joy his work inspired.

After earning a bachelor's degree at San Francisco's Simpson College in 1972, Reverend Jackson pursued a Master of Divinity at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Reverend Jackson also became the first African-American clergy member to graduate from the Master of Nonprofit Administration program at University of San Francisco when he earned his third degree there in